

## Amilcar

Paris, France was the center of automobile manufacturing after World War I. Hundreds of small companies specialized in what was known as the sporting *voiturette*, small cars that were built for performance not comfort.

Among the most successful manufacturers was Amilcar which began production in 1920 from the remnants of light car builder Le Zèbre backed by financiers Emil Akar and Joseph Lamy. Amilcar made its own engines and employed outside suppliers for only components including carburetors, radiators and electrical equipment.

The initial model built was named the CC, two-seat runabout would be the basis for all four-cylinder Amilcars made afterwards. The flathead four displaced 903-cc, and relied on thermo-syphon cooling, magneto ignition, and splash lubrication for its two-bearing crankshaft. There was no differential; engineers thought the narrow, 43-inch track and skinny tires made one unnecessary. Most Amilcars were with a Petit Sport body, staggered seating for two, a boattail and either cycle fenders or fenders integrated with running boards.

A new CS model Amilcar went racing in 1922. The new CS model was powered by a 985-cc four cylinder providing 23 horsepower. It won first-place finish in its first event, a 24-hour race for small cars and motorcycles held in the Forest of Saint-Germain followed by a 3-4 finish at the Le Mans Grand Prix de Cyclecars.

Next the Amilcar set up a racing department which introduced the CGS, or Grand Sport. It sported front-wheel brakes, a redesigned cylinder head with a displacement of 1,074-cc. The adoption of full pressure lubrication system and was accomplished speeds of 75 mph making the CGS dominant in French hill climbs and races.

The sporting *voiturette* fell out of favor, Amilcar's CGSs production ended in 1929 and Amilcar would last another decade. In 1937 the automotive businesses of Hotchkiss and Amilcar merged and a prototype would be developed into an Amilcar model that would become the Amilcar Compound B38, a front wheel drive sedan. The Compound was introduced in October 1937, 584 of the 681 passenger cars were built in 1939, with another 64 produced during the early months of 1940. With the German invasion in May of 1940 all production ended and Amilcar did not resume after the war. Production of the four-cylinder Amilcar totaled 15,500 of which 4,700 were CGS and CGSs cars.